DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 167 PS 018 475

AUTHOR Kerwin, Sheila
TITLE Oakton Community College: Early Childhood Career Opportunities (ECCO) Program. Program Description Based on Grant Abstract.
PUB DATE Dec 89
NOTE 24p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Caregivers; *College Curriculum; Community Colleges; *Day Care; Early Childhood Education; *Hispanic Americans; Limited English Speaking; Minority Groups; Postsecondary Education; Program Descriptions; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *East Indians; *Pakistanis; Program Characteristics

ABSTRACT

The Early Childhood Career Opportunities (ECCO) Program is a 21-week program of intensive training that provides limited-English-proficient Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani adult students with the required skills for entry-level positions in the child care field. Courses in early childhood focus on child growth and development, introduction to early childhood education, health and nutrition for the young child, play and creative expression, preschool techniques, and infant/toddler techniques. English-as-a-second-language courses for non-native speakers focus on reading and study skills, advanced reading and study skills, and grammar and composition. The ECCO program is located at the Oakton East Campus of Oakton Community College in Skokie, Illinois. Students successfully completing the course of studies are awarded Oakton's 18-hour certificate in Early Childhood Development. This report includes a training schedule, demographic data on ECCO students, and program objectives and activities. Sources of additional information about the program, including press releases and articles, are listed. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED314167

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

OAKTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREER OPPORTUNITIES (ECCO) PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION BASED ON GRANT ABSTRACT

DECEMBER 1989

SHEILA KERWIN, PROJECT DIRECTOR

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sheila Kerwin

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

PS 018475

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The ECCO Program is a federally-funded, tuition-free grant program designed to prepare limited English proficient Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani adults for entry-level positions in the field of child care. Funds are received from the U.S. Office of Education, through the Bilingual Vocational Education Program.

The project is running in three separate, 21-week cycles. Cycle 1 began July 31, 1989. Cycle 2 will begin January 29, 1990, and Cycle 3 will begin July 30, 1990.

The guiding purpose of the ECCO Program is to provide students with the required skills for entry-level positions in the child care field in as short a period of time as possible, without diluting the rigor of instruction.

The program philosophy statement is as follows:

The Early Childhood Career Opportunities (ECCO) Program at Oakton Community College is designed to prepare limited English proficient Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani adults for employment in the expanding field of Early Childhood Education.

During the 21-week intensive training program, students will develop skills and competencies which are needed for working with young children, and improve English speaking and writing skills.

The Early Childhood academic study includes the following courses:

ECD 102	Child Growth and Development
ECD 104	Introduction to Early Childhood Education
ECD 108	Health and Nutrition for the Young Child
ECD 125	Play and Creative Expression
ECD 160	Preschool Techniques
ECD 215	Infant/Toddler Techniques

The ESL component includes the following courses:

ENG 072	Reading and Study Skills for the Non-Native Speaker
ENG 073	Advanced Reading and Study Skills for the Non-Native Speaker
ENG 075	Grammar and Composition for the Non-Native Speaker

Students successfully completing the course of studies are awarded Oakton's 18-hour certificate in Early Childhood Development.

In addition to demonstrating a knowledge and an understanding of early childhood theoretical foundations, ECCO students must show an aptitude for working and interacting with young children. To ensure this, ECCO students are affiliated at an approved child care center for 60 hours of supervised field experience.

The ECCO Program believes in the value and strength of cultural diversity, particularly in the field of Early Childhood Education. Emphasis is placed on helping ECCO students understand the approach to preschool education in the United States while maintaining the values and culture of their country of origin. It is important for ECCO students to recognize the cultural strengths which they bring to this program and to the early childhood classroom. It is our hope that they will be cultural role models for the young children with whom they work, thus enabling children to take pride in their own cultural uniqueness as well as appreciating this in others.

The ECCO Program believes that this cultural diversity will in turn enhance our graduates' opportunities for employment in the field. There is an acute shortage of child care workers today and a growing demand for staff at entry level. ECCO students present an excellent opportunity for child care employers to meet the needs of the children and families they serve.

The target population for the ECCO Program, Cycle 1 is limited English proficient Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani adults living in and out of the Oakton Community College district. Much interest in the ECCO Program was expressed by all three ethnic groups during the recruitment period. We did receive isolated inquiries from Iranian, Yugoslavian, and Israeli individuals but not heavy interest from other ethnic groups. It is our estimation that there is both strong need and interest in the child care field on the part of the groups currently being served. We will continue with the Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani target population for the next cycle and watch carefully for new groups expressing interest in ECCO.

Program Location

The ECCO Program is located at the Oakton East Campus of Oakton Community College, at 7701 N. Lincoln Avenue in Skokie, Illinois, just north of Chicago. There is a very large, self-contained classroom within which all classes and activities are conducted (nearby classrooms are occasionally used for individual tutoring or staff meetings). Two adjoining offices are located at the rear of the classroom, one shared by the ESL Manager and vocational instructors, and the other shared by the Project Coordinator and part-time clerk. The setting is spacious, bright and attractive. It is an ideal arrangement for this kind of full-time vocational training program.

The large classroom size makes it possible to be very flexible with both in-class activities and program events. Students are able to work on group projects and presentations together comfortably and there is sufficient space for visitors and observers. It is possible for the ESL Manager and the Project Coordinator to observe class sessions from their offices without disturbing instruction.

TRAINING SCHEDULE - REVISED

The ECCO Program training schedule is as follows:

Weeks 1, Orientation

Monday-Thursday	8:30-10:15	ECD 102, Child Growth and Development
Break	10:30-12:15	ECD 125, Play and Creative Expression
	12:15-1:15	Lunch
	1:15-1:30	Individual Tutoring
	1:30-3:30	EGL 072, Reading and Study Skills for the Non-Native Speaker
Friday	9:00-11:00	Affiliation, Part I, at assigned day care centers
	1:00-2:00	Affiliation Seminar
	2:00-3:00	Supplemental English exercises; assignment review

Weeks 8-13

Monday-Thursday	8:30-10:15	ECD 108, Health, Safety and Nutrition for the Young Child
	Break	
	10:30-12:15	ECD 160, Preschool Techniques
	12:15-1:15	Lunch
	12:30-1:00	Individual Tutoring
	1:30-3:30	EGL 073, Advanced Reading and Study Skills for the Non-Native Speaker

Friday	9:00-11:00	Affiliation, Part 1
	1:00-2:00	Affiliation Seminar
	2:00-3:00	Supplemental English exercises; assignment review

Weeks 14-19

Monday-Thursday	8:30-10:15	ECD 104, Introduction to Early Childhood Education
	Break	
	10:30-12:15	ECD 215, Infant/Toddler Techniques
	12:15-1:15	Lunch
	12:30-1:00	Individual Tutoring
	1:30-3:30	EGL 075, Grammar and Composition for the Non-Native Speaker
Friday	9:00-11:00	Affiliation, Part 1
	1:00-2:00	Affiliation Seminar
	2:00-3:00	Supplemental English exercises; assignment review

Weeks 20-21, December 11-22

Monday-Thursday	8:30-12:30	Affiliation, Part II (Student complete second half of field experience)
Monday-Thursday	1:30-3:30	Pre-vocational Skills Training
Friday	9:00-12:00	Special Seminar on Affiliation Part II
	Noon -	Job Search Activities (phone calls, interviews)

DEMOGRAPHICS ON ECCO STUDENTS, CYCLE 1

There are 19 students enrolled in the ECCO Program, Cycle One. These students represent several cities in and around the Oakton district:

Skokie, Illinois (ECCO Program is located at this campus): 2
Des Plaines, Illinois: 6
Chicago, Illinois: 8
Schaumburg, Illinois: 1
Palatine, Illinois: 1
Elk Grove Village, Illinois: 1

The ethnic break-down of students is as follows:

Hispanic: 8
Indian: 8
Pakistani: 3

Students travel to campus by car or on public transportation, or both - the break-down is as follows:

Car: 10 Public Transportation only: 3 Both: 7

It is interesting to note that one student living on the south side of Chicago travels on public transportation daily, for a total of 4 hours per day. Several other students taking public transportation travel a minimum of two hours daily, while several traveling by car also travel an hour to an hour and a half to get to class each day.

Ten ECCO students gave up either full or part-time jobs to enter the program.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

1. TO DEVELOP A BILINGUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO PREPARE LEP INDIVIDUALS FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE CHILD CARE FIELD.

Activities

*Hire and orient project staff:

Project Coordinator - March 1989
ESL Manager - May 1989
Vocational Instuctors- June 1989
Bilingual Tutors - July 1989
Clerk - July 1989

*Develop appropriate tools to assess students' language and child care skills and diagnose areas of weakness:

English Language Competency

1. Basic English Skills test (required) - both the Oral Interview and Literacy Skills sections are used

2. Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) Test, used by Oakton to assess reading comprehension skills

3. Writing Skills Assessment Test (WSAT), also used by Oakton to place students in appropriate Oakton EGL writing courses

The B.E.S.T. is primarily administered by the ESL Manager. The DRP and WSAT instruments are administered at scheduled dates through the college Testing Centers, or by the ESL Manager and Project Director.

Vocational Competency (Child Care Interest/Aptitude)

The following instruments have been established:

-a Vocational Attitude Survey (written questionnaire) is used to determine applicant's sense of commitment to a full-time academic program and a high-energy, people-oriented field.

-an oral interview to gain a sense of applicant's previous child care experience, interest in and aptitude for working with young children, and judgment in various child care situations.

These screening instruments are primarily administered by the Project Coordinator.

Screening appointments for Cycle 1 began mid-May, 1989, and were concluded mid-July. Screening for Cycle 2 is ongoing, as inquiries are received. Screening appointments are usually scheduled for the mornings, when both the Project Coordinator and ESL Manager are available to meet applicants together. Frequent follow-up phone calls are placed to applicants following their acceptance to the program. A letter of confirmation is sent to all accepted students. The Project Coordinator and the ESL Manager agree that the frequent phone contact generated with the students has positively impacted on our Cycle One retention rate.

*Adapt existing ESL courses EGL 072, 073, and 075 for the training program.

The ESL Manager has assumed primary responsibility for the adaptation and development of the ESL courses for ECCO. She has taught these courses at Oakton in the past, so is very familiar with their content. The ESL Manager met several times during June and July 1989 with the vocational instructors as well as the in-house ECD faculty consultant to carefully plan and coordinate the ESL courses with ECD courses. In addition to this, she has made use of a variety of materials from the Northwest Educational Cooperative library in Des Plaines, Illinois.

*Adapt existing Oakton ECD courses ECD 102, 104, 108, 125, 160, and 215 for the training program.

While the major responsibility for adapting the ECD courses has been assumed by the vocational instructors, a joint effort on the part of the Project Coordinator, ESL Manager, in-house ECD faculty consultant, and vocational instructors was made during June and July. The staff met several times to discuss the goals and objectives of the Oakton courses and ways to present the material to ECCO students in a very short period of time without diluting the content of the courses. Preliminary determinations were made toward the primary focus of each course so that students would be able to digest material most vital to their entry to the child care field.

One of the vocational instructors has been a part-time faculty member in the regular Oakton ECD program for four years, having taught most of the courses offered in the ECCO Program. Additionally, the in-house consultant has been a full-time faculty member in the regular ECD program for thirteen years, and provided invaluable contributions to the course adaptation process. The vocational instructors met together and with the ESL Manager and in-house consultant to prepare the courses in order to coordinate goals, objectives, content, topics, and assignments.

*Provide inservice training for vocational instructors on effective teaching techniques for LEP adults.

On June 14, 1989 an inservice training session was conducted by the ESL Manager and a faculty member from the communications Department at Oakton who has worked with LEP adults for several years. Items of discussion included developing sensitivity to the unique needs of LEP adults; appropriate ways to present written material to students; methods of simplifying lecture language and in-class activities; and ways to assist students in covering textbook material.

*Select and/or develop instructional materials for the job-related ESL and vocational courses.

ESL Courses

The ESL Manager, Virginia Gibbons, has drawn on previous outlines used for the EGL 072, 073, and 075 courses as the basis for the job-related version of the courses she teaches. Additionally, current ESL texts were ordered for use with these courses on the suggestion of the Communications Department faculty member assisting in the inservice training session for the vocational instuctors. The ESL Manager has spent considerable time generating original study guides, vocabulary lists, summaries, activities and other materials using the vocational texts. She has supplemented these materials with additional items obtained from the Northwest Educational Cooperative library, as mentioned earlier.

The ESL Manager has also made excellent use of support services offered by the College, specifically the College library and learning lab. The learning lab offers additional tutoring and conversation groups as well as the use of computer software containing a grammar exercise program. She has taken the students to a local public library in nearby Lincolnwood, Illinois, to familiarize them with its services. Students were given a tour of the Children's Section and heard presentations on the selection of appropriate children's books; puppet making; and felt-board activities. A visit to Skokie Public Library was made in early October.

Vocational Courses

The vocational courses are based on existing Oakton ECD courses. Outlines for existing courses are the basis from which the ECCO courses have been prepared.

It remains the principal goal of the coursework component of the program to present the material to students that is necessary for preparation for work with young children and their families, without diluting the content of these courses. The major emphasis is on practical knowledge and experiential learning. A mixture of lecture, class discussion, film, role play, group projects, and in-class activities are being used to help students master the course material, draw on their experiences with their own children and cultural traditions, and make connections between the coursework and affiliation experience.

*Design recruitment materials targeted to the LEP population.

The Project Coordinator designed flyers in English and Spanish in April 1989. These flyers, with cover letters, were sent in May 1989 to churches, libraries, high schools, adult education programs, ESL programs, Oakton ESL instructors, community agencies, day care centers, suburban newspapers, Spanish-language and Hindi and Urdu-language newspapers. Updated flyers have also been sent to elementary schools and any individuals or groups inquiring about ECCO.

In conjunction with the College Relations Office at Oakton, press releases were sent to local, suburban, and ethnic newspapers. For more detail, see section on recruitment.

A second mailing for Cycle 2 recruitment was made in October 1989.

*Contact community groups, churches, and ethnic leaders for assistance in recruitment.

Both the Project Coordinator and ESL Manager have contacted community groups, churches, and ethnic leaders for assistance in recruitment. This is actually done on an ongoing basis, and whenever possible, face-to-face meetings are scheduled. Staff have met with individuals as well as groups. For more detail, see section on recruitment.

*Establish agreements with area day care centers and preschools to serve as placement sites for project enrollees.

This process began in May 1989. The Project Coordinator, ESL Manager and in-house ECD faculty consultant visited ten child care centers between May and July 1989 to describe the ECCO Program and establish agreements for Fall placement of Cycle 1 students. The in-house consultant's role was integral to this process since she works with practicum students in the regular

Oakton ECD Program and is acquainted with all the centers participating in the affiliation for ECCO. These centers are familiar with the regular Oakton ECD program and have accepted the College's students for many years. We have heard favorable comments about ECCO students from center directors and supervising teachers. For more details regarding the affiliation component, see the section on vocational training.

*Hold meetings with the staff of area day care centers and preschools to orient them to the program.

In addition to the description and explanation of the goals for the ECCO Program during visits to the child care centers, a special meeting was scheduled for participating centers on August 2, 1989, during Orientation Week.

This inservice was conducted around the specific needs and behaviors of adult ESL students, their approach to academic learning, cultural traditions, and specifically, child-rearing practices. One of the vocational instructors spoke on the needs of Indian and Pakistani students and an outside speaker discussed the needs of Hispanic students. In addition, affiliation materials were distributed and guidelines reviewed.

2. **TO RECRUIT, SCREEN, AND SELECT 60 LEP INDIVIDUALS** INTERESTED IN THE FIELD OF CHILD CARE FOR ENROLLMENT TO THE TRAINING PROGRAM BY JULY, 1989, JANUARY, 1990, AND JULY, 1990.

Activities

*Prepare and distribute promotional material describing the program (brochures, posters, press releases, radio and t.v. spots).

Flyers, designed in English and Spanish, were distributed beginning May 1989 to churches, high schools, adult education programs, community agencies, day care centers, libraries and Spanish, Hindi, and Urdu-language newspapers. A mailing list was generated over the course of several months and is updated on an ongoing basis.

Flyers were distributed by hand at grocery and convenience stores, discount department stores, gas stations, laundromats, restaurants, beauty salons, rapid transit stations, travel agencies, Oakton ECD and ECCO Advisory Committee meetings, Oakton ESL classes, and individuals on the street.

Mailing and distribution of flyers was completed in and out of the Oakton district. Specific areas targeted included the suburbs of Des Plaines, Skokie, and Evanston, Illinois as well as areas in the northern section of Chicago where there are heavy concentrations of Hispanic, Indian, and Pakistani families.

Press releases appeared in at least six suburban newspapers and in one national Indian-language newspaper (India Abroad).

Radio announcements were made on several Spanish-language radio stations.

Cable television notices were written in both English and Spanish.

An employer brochure was recently designed for distribution to preschool and day care center directors, licensing representatives, administrators, and other child care contact people. In addition, an Open House was held October 19 to which the Oakton Community, child care directors, teachers, administrators, community agencies, ethnic leaders, licensing representatives, and other interested parties were invited. This was an opportunity to promote the ECCO Program and to enable students to begin networking for employment early in the training cycle.

Telephone calls to advertise ECCO have been made on an ongoing basis to numerous agencies and new contacts are continually developed. We have developed a strong working relationship with Asian Human Services, a social service agency based in the Chicago inner-city. The agency sent us eight applicants and two bilingual tutor candidates. We are also developing consistent contact with ASPIRA of Illinois, an Hispanic social service agency in Chicago, the Evanston Latino Association, and the Head Start Program through the Department of Human Services. We see the Head Start contact as particulary valuable since Head Start centers are potential employment contacts for ECCO students, and Head Start parents are potential applicants for the ECCO Program.

Presentations describing ECCO have been conducted at Oakton ESL classes, community agencies, day care centers, Oakton ECD Program Advisory Committee meetings, ECD Faculty/staff meetings and day care symposiums.

In November 1989 a current student made a presentation in Spanish to the Evanston Latino Association. The ESL Manager was present as well.

"Word of mouth" is also an ongoing process. ECCO faculty and staff consistently promote the program and students are encouraged to do so also.

The Project Coordinator and ESL Manager will conduct a presentation on ECCO at the Chicago Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) Conference in February 1990.

All recruitment efforts have been conducted in and out of the Oakton district.

*Contact community organizations, churches, and leaders in each ethnic community for potential applicants from the target population, with follow-up visits and/or phone calls.

We have focused considerable energy in contacting community agencies and churches since they have direct contact with potential ECCO applicants and work with large numbers of people on a daily basis. The ECCO Program fits into the framework of the services provided by both community agencies and churches, as they work to build their clients' survival skills, acculturation, and employability.

*Conduct initial screening for basic entrance criteria and make referrals as needed.

The initial screening for Cycle One began mid-May 1989 and was concluded in mid-July, shortly before the training program began. As explained earlier, the Project Coordinator and the ESL Manager assume specific tasks in the screening process (and conduct the entire screening in each other's absence). A total of 31 applicants were screened for Cycle 1; 23 applicants were accepted to the program, with 3 applicants dropping before Orientation.

A fourth applicant dropped during the first week of class, since she lived a considerable distance from campus. This leaves the number of students for Cycle 1 at 19.

Screening for Cycle 2 applicants is conducted on an ongoing basis, as inquiries are received, rather than at a specified time, which might limit the potential number of applicants. We anticipate launching Cycle 2 with at least 20 students, and plan to screen students for Cycle 3 in the same manner.

*Assess applicants for English proficiency.

As stated earlier, it is primarily the responsibility of the ESL Manager to assess applicants for proficiency in English as part of the screening process for the ECCO Program. An explanation of the ESL component of the screening process is found in the section on the development of screening instruments.

*Assess applicants for child care skills.

It is the primary responsibility of the Project Coordinator to assess the child care skills of ECCO applicants. Two instruments, the Vocational Attitude Survey and an Oral Interview, were developed and are explained in detail in the section on the development of screening instruments.

*Provide one week of orientation to the program for all students.

The Project Coordinator and the ESL Manager assumed primary responsibility for the planning and execution of the Orientation Program, with in-put from the vocational instructors and in-house ECD consultant. Orientation Week for Cycle 1 was conducted during the week of July 31-August 4, 1989. Activities included introductions to the ECCO faculty and staff, Oakton's Director of Development, the Social Sciences and Business Division Dean, and the Assistant Vice President for Curriculum and Instruction; a film on the crisis in American day care; a tour of the college facilities; meetings with the ESL Manager to develop individual learning plans; meetings with the Project Coordinator to set up affiliation assignments; and field trips to an area day care center participating in the ECCO Program as well as the Chicago Expressways Children's Museum.

3. **TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS OF 60 LEP ENROLLEES TO THE LEVEL NEEDED TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY AS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER.**

Activities

*Provide job-specific English language instruction two hours per day, four days per week, for 18 weeks, in special sections of EGL 072, 073, and 075.

For the first six weeks of Cycle 1, the ESL Manager provided job-specific English language instruction to ECCO students three afternoons per week (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday), for 2 1/2 hours per day, in order to allow time for a weekly staff meeting each Thursday afternoon. Beginning in Stage 2, for the second six weeks, the staff meetings were moved to Friday mornings and the ESL classes were scheduled four afternoons per week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday), for 2 hours per day. This schedule will remain in place for the remainder of the cycle.

*Provide individual and small group tutoring sessions each week.

Two bilingual tutors, one English/Spanish and one English/Hindi/Urdu, work twenty hours weekly in the program and provide both individual and small group tutoring sessions. At present, the tutors provide half-hour individual tutoring sessions on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

The tutors' schedule changed when the ESL classes went from three to four days per week. It is likely that more individual sessions will be made available to students during their lunch hour (12:15-1:30) and that the tutors will facilitate in-class group projects for EGL 073 and 075.

*Provide bilingual tutoring in vocational class.

Both tutors provide bilingual tutoring in the vocational classes. They also clarify concepts with the help of the vocational instructors. The tutors are given copies of all textbooks and related materials used in the ECD classes, and they consult regularly with the ESL Manager and vocational instructors to clarify course objectives, discuss assignments, exams, and issues brought to their attention by the students. A weekly meeting with the Project Coordinator, ESL Manager, and bilingual tutors is scheduled so that the tutors can provide staff with valuable feed-back, suggestions, and clarify coursework assignments and procedures in order to best meet the needs of the students. While we believe we enjoy a very positive relationship with our Cycle 1 students, we have found (and anticipated) that many students seeking help from tutors might express needs and/or issues more freely with the bilingual tutors. The tutors not only provide the academic help, but offer very essential emotional support and encouragement as well, which we believe has been instrumental in building a trusting relationship between students and program staff.

In addition, two volunteers from the Passages and VITA Programs at Oakton participate in Thursday afternoon conversation groups covering various themes designed to familiarize students with other facets of American culture, such as family, child-rearing customs, education, holidays, etc.

*Provide students with information on other available support services, including dialect modification and basic skills tutoring.

The ESL Manager has consistently provided students with the above information as regular features in the ESL classes. In addition, she has made excellent use of the college learning lab to familiarize students with its services, which include additional tutoring, conversation groups, and software programs for ESL students. All project staff in their regular dealings with the students work to model appropriate oral and written English, and have found that students frequently ask questions about vocabulary and grammar.

*Make periodic assessments of student progress in language fluency and basic skills.

The ESL Manager makes periodic assessments of student progress in language fluency and basic skills through her in-class observations, review of students' assignments and exams, observations of vocational classes, and review of students' tutoring sessions and special library assignments (given to more highly-skilled students who do not require frequent tutoring). She reviews and discusses the first drafts of students' assignments.

*Visit the vocational classroom as needed to observe students.

The ESL Manager visits the vocational classes frequently, taking notes on lectures, discussions, in-class activities, or films. She carefully observes students during class to assess their mastery of the vocational course content as well as their interaction with each other, the bilingual tutors, and the vocational instructors. She also meets informally with the vocational instuctors to report her impressions of students' progress or issues and to ensure the coordination between the vocational courses and ESL courses.

4. TO PREPARE 60 LEP ENROLLEES FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE CHILD CARE FIELD THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

Activities

*Provide classroom vocational training for four hours per day, four days per week, for 17 weeks in special sections of ECD 102, 104, 108, 125, 160, and 215.

Vocational training is being provided to ECCO students four hours per day, four days per week. ECD courses 102 (Child Growth and Development), 125 (Play and Creative Expression) ECD 108 (Health, Safety, and Nutrition), and ECD 160 (Preschool Techniques) have been completed. The final two ECD courses, scheduled for the third 6-week period (Stage 3) are ECD 104 (Introduction to Early Childhood Education) and 215 (Infant/Toddler Techniques).

The bilingual tutors attend all sessions of the ECD classes, seated with the students throughout the session, translating for students when necessary and taking notes to prepare for individual and small group tutoring sessions.

*Introduce students to the reality of the child care workplace through field trips, center observations, and other "hands-on" activities.

The vocational instructors, ESL Manager, and Project Coordinator have all participated in introducing ECCO students to the reality of the child care workplace.

During Orientation Week the students viewed a film entitled, "Who Cares for the Children?" which aired on PBS Television in 1988 during the Week of the Young Child. The documentary takes a comprehensive, realistic look at the way America cares its for young children, discussing the often high-cost and average-to-low quality of day care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The film also looks at the salaries and working conditions for day care employees. We considered this an important feature of the Orientation Week schedule, and purposely scheduled the film for the first day of Orientation

in order to get preliminary reactions from the students and to give them a realistic view of the day care situation in the United States. It is important for them not only to be able to understand what comprises a good child care program, but to begin seeing themselves as valuable contributors to a rapidly growing and changing field, and to the lives of the young children whom they will serve.

The visit to one of the participating day care centers at the end of Orientation Week gave students an opportunity to indeed observe a high-quality, well-run center. This large, eleven-classroom center serving infants, toddlers, and preschoolers is spacious, well-staffed and well-equipped. Three of our students are completing their Affiliations at this center.

The trip to Expressways Children's Museum in downtown Chicago provided students an opportunity to view an exciting attraction designed from the child's point of view. This museum provides an array of hands-on activities which encourage children to explore, compare, make relationships, create, and problem-solve -- which is exactly what we encourage students to do in their work with young children.

Students are required to make several observations of children at their assigned day care centers as well as other centers, in addition to planning and executing specific activities in the classroom, so they are involved in a variety of experimental projects throughout the training period.

*Provide students with total of six hours of supervised experience working with children in Oakton's Child Development Demonstration Centers on a rotated basis.

Students will visit the Skokie campus Child Development Demonstration Center (where ECCO is also located) once during the training period, primarily due to time constraints and the expansion of the Affiliation Component of the program.

*Place students in a participating day care or preschool for four hours per day, four days per week, for two weeks, for a total of 32 hours of practicum experience.

The Affiliation Component (formerly referred to as practicum) of the ECCO Program has been expanded to two parts. Part One of the Affiliation runs during the actual coursework period, for a total of 15 of the 18 weeks (to ease students into the program, we began the Affiliation the second week of class). Students are assigned to one child care center for the duration of the entire training period, and during their coursework, visit their center each Friday morning for a minimum of two hours, interacting with children and staff, familiarizing themselves with the center's philosophy and schedule. They also make observations and carry out planned activities at their center. The total number of hours for Affiliation, Part 1 is a minimum of 36.

Affiliation, Part 2, begins following the coursework training period, which ends December 8, 1989. This second half of the Affiliation runs for two weeks (December 11-22), four hours per day, four mornings per week (Monday-Thursday, 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM). During this time students return to their assigned center to assume responsibility for the group of children with whom they have been working for the previous 15 weeks. Students are required to plan a two-week unit and carry it out during this time.

The center directors and supervising teachers provide students guidance and feed-back throughout both parts of the Affiliation, and complete evaluation forms for both parts as well, which they submit to the Project Coordinator at the end of the training period.

The Project Coordinator maintains phone contact with center directors to ensure that students are interacting appropriately with children and developing a positive, professional working relationship with center staff. The Project Director observes each student once during the training period and additional times if necessary. Directors and supervising teachers are requested to contact the Project Director if problems arise. When necessary, she arranges a meeting between the student, center staff, and herself to discuss issues. Students are encouraged to contact the Project Director about any concerns as well, and are additionally encouraged to approach center staff with questions or concerns that arise in their Affiliation activities.

Center staff are requested to assist students with questions about the center, its philosophy, schedule, and specific children (when appropriate). Students are also encouraged to bring questions about assignments to their supervising teacher to get feed-back before and after the project is carried out.

Part 2 of the Affiliation component carries a total of 16 hours; the 36 hours for Part 1 and 16 hours for Part 2 carry a total of 60 hours of Affiliation experience for the training period.

*Hold a group meeting with students to discuss their practicum experience and any problems or questions they may have had.

The Project Director felt it very important not to limit this aspect of the Affiliation component to a single meeting. An affiliation seminar was thus established, scheduled from 1:00-2:00 PM each Friday afternoon, following the students' visits to their assigned centers during Affiliation, Part 1. The purpose of the Seminar is to allow students a weekly opportunity to discuss their affiliation experiences, compare notes, share sucesses, and problem-solve together. This is vital to the students' abilities to understand their center's approach to working with young children, cope with a variety of

situations in the classroom life of preschoolers, learn to work with child care staff and parents, and accept supervision. The feed-back they give and receive from each other is essential to their development as professionals in the child care field. The seminar provides an avenue by which students consider and act on the discussion and feed-back in their subsequent visits to their centers.

A questionnaire will be sent to all participating centers to obtain feed-back on the Affiliation component and suggestions for ways to improve this aspect of the program for Cycles 2 and 3.

*Provide counseling and other support services as needed to all trainees.

All Project Staff have provided counseling and support to the student both formally and informally. The vocational instructors, ESL Manager, and Project Coordinator keep weekly office hours in order to provide extensive availability to students for personal and/or job counseling.

It has been found that generally, most of the students freely approach staff with questions or concerns. Many have expressed their anxiety about tests and assignments or doubts about their command of English. Others have expressed feelings of stress about their families' response to their participation in the program. Staff see this outpouring of feelings as very positive because it signifies that student feel comfortable sharing some very real and complicated concerns with ECCO staff. Whenever possible, staff offer practical suggestions around time management, study skills, and meeting their families' needs as well as well as their own. Consistent availability and emotional support seem equally important as academic guidance in enabling students to achieve success in this intensive training program.

*Provide coaching in prevocational skills such as interviewing skills, etc., for two hours per day, four afternoons per week (Monday-Thursday, 1:30-3:30 PM).

This prevocational skills training period will include interview skills, resume writing, investigating newspaper want ads, and locating high-quality child care centers for employment possibilities. Much of this is already taking place on an informal level, such as encouraging students to habitually scan the want ads in the local newspapers, which are also posted in the classroom Job Book. This post-coursework training period will discuss these skills in much greater depth, however, and we anticipate that students will have already compiled a list of contacts by that point in the program. It is for this reason that the Open House was scheduled so early on in the cycle, so that students learn to network right away, and ECCO staff get an early sense of which centers are looking to hire aides.

5. **TO PLACE AT LEAST 75% OF THE SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM GRADUATES IN JOBS IN THE CHILD CARE FIELD WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER GRADUATION.**

Activities

*Identify and contact potential employers with promotional brochure, cover letter, phone call, and visit.

The Project Coordinator has begun contacting potential employers through her contact with child care centers participating in the ECCO Program, Oakton ECD faculty, child care program administrators, local newspaper want ads, and other sources. An employer brochure explaining the ECCO Program will be sent to preschools, day care centers, before and after-school programs, Head Start programs, licensing representatives, and any other potential contact persons.

All brochure mailings will be followed up with a phone call and/or visit. Establishing such contacts will be an ongoing activity throughout the training period.

In addition, a phone survey will be conducted to obtain information around center philosophy, staffing needs and turn-over; cultural make up of staff and families served; and salaries.

*Confirm employers interested in hiring students who complete the program.

This activity can also be accomplished on an ongoing basis, with particular emphasis given to the Open House held in mid-October. Several of the participating child care centers have already expressed their satisfaction with the work of the ECCO students, and some have also communicated their desire to hire them as teacher aides should openings occur in the coming months.

*Refer all program graduates to at least one appropriate potential employer within two weeks of program completion.

It is anticipated that the Project Director will be able to refer all program graduates to at least one appropriate potential employer within two weeks of Cycle One Graduation (December 21). The Director has begun posting job advertisements from local newspapers as well as job announcements received in the mail. In addition, she will make use of the child care center mailing list begun in May 1989, which is constantly updated.

*Conduct follow-up by phone to document characteristics of job held, obtain assessment of program, and identify additional services needed (30 and 90 days).

The Project Director will contact by phone all graduates securing jobs to document the characteristics and responsibilities of their new positions and obtain information about the child care program for which they work. This will be done at both the 30 and 90-day periods. In addition, graduates not employed within two weeks following graduation will be contacted to determine if they have in fact obtained employment and to discuss their job search strategies.

A reunion of Cycle 1 graduates will be scheduled as well, to give them an opportunity to share their new employment experiences. They will also be invited to visit Cycle 2 classes to speak to new ECCO students and share their successes.

*Conduct employer follow-up by phone, visits, and/or mail survey to verify placement, assess graduates' performance, and obtain suggestions for improving program (30 and 90 days).

The Project Coordinator will conduct employer follow-up by phone contact in order to maintain more personal contact with child care centers hiring ECCO graduates. Forms have already been designed to record the kinds of jobs students obtain and how long they keep these positions. In addition to obtaining such information over the telephone, a brief mail survey will be developed to assess graduates' job performance as well as to request feed-back from center directors on ECCO and suggestions for improving the program. Phone contact will be made at both the 30 and 90-day periods, and the survey will be mailed at the 90-day period.

PUBLICITY

The ECCO Program has received valuable publicity during this first training cycle. Press releases or articles have appeared in the following publications:

May 20, 1989: The Daily Herald

May 25, 1989: The Pioneer Central

May 25, 1989: The Pioneer Northshore

May 25, 1989: The Evanston Review

August 14, 1989: The Chicago Tribune

August 16, 1989: Community College Week

August 21, 1989: Report on Preschool Programs

October 5, 1989: India Abroad

October 14, 1989: The Bugle

October 27, 1989: La Raza

0077H